Soil Erosion

2297. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that over 57 per cent of country's land area is suffering from various levels of degradation and that a staggering 5.3 tonnes of top soil is lost every year through erosion; as reported in the Hindustan Time dated 10th February, 2000;

(b) whether it is a fact that excessive use of the chemical fertilizers and over-exploitation of ground water resources have spell disaster in some States; and

(c) if so, how Government propose to tackle this problem of soil conservation etc. and whether any study at central level is proposed to be undertaken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) As per the assessment made by Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR), out of the total geographical area of 329 m.ha. of the country, the area affected by soil degradation is about 187 m.ha (57%) and approximately 5334 m tonnes of soil is lost per annum.

(b) Yes Sir, in some states (list enclosed) (*see below*) the constant fall in groundwater level due to over exploitation is a matter of concern. As far as the level of fertilizer consumption in India is concerned, it is far below as compared to advanced countries like Netherland, U.K., Japan, etc.

(c) Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) has generated data on nature and extent of Soil degradation in the country and worked out appropriate land use planning to prevent Soil degradation. Suitable mechnical, bio-engineering measures and management practices to alleviate soil degradation problems have already been devleoped.

The Department of Agriculture and Cooperation is implementing following Schemes to control the problem of land degradation in the country, which indirectly help recharge the groundwater:—

(i) Soil Conservation in the catchments of River Valley Projects and Flood Prone Rivers.

(ii) Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Area.

(iii) National Watershed Development Project in Rainfed Area.

(iv) Reclamation of Alkali Soils.

In addition, the Minister of Water Resources is implementing a Central Sector Scheme on recharging ground water for improving avilability of ground water as well as raising the position of ground water table.

STATEMENT

Categorisation of Blocks/Mandals/taluks/watersheds as Over-exploited and Dark on All India Basis

Sl. No.	State/UTs	Number of districts	Number of Blocks/ Mandals/ taluks/ Watersheds	Number of Blocks/Mandals/ taluks/Watersheds			
				Over Exploited		Dark	
				No.	%	No.	%
1.	Andhra Pradesh	23	1104	6	0.54	24	2.17
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	8	48	—	—	—	—
3.	Assam	23	134	—	—	—	—
4.	Bihar	42	585	—	—	1	0.17
5.	Goa	3	12	—	—	—	—
6.	Gujarat	19	184	12	6.52	14	7.61
7.	Haryana	16	108	45	41.67	6	5.56
8.	Himachal Pradesh	12	69	—	—	—	—
9.	Jammu Kashmir	14	123	—	—	—	—
10.	Karnataka	19	175	6	3.43	12	6.86
11.	Kerala	14	154	—	—	1	0.65
12.	Madhya Pradesh	15	459	—	—	3	0.65
13.	Maharashtra	30	1053	—	—	34	2.26
14.	Manipur	6	26	—	—	—	—
15.	Meghalaya	5	29	—	—	—	—
16.	Mizoram	3	30	—	—	—	—
17.	Nagaland	7	21	—	—	—	—
18.	Orissa	27	314	—	—	—	—
19.	Punjab	12	118	62	52.54	8	6.78
20.	Rajasthan	30	236	85	19.07	11	4.66
21.	Sikkim	4	4	—	—	—	—
22.	Tamil Nadu	21	384	54	14.06	43	11.20
23.	Tripura	3	17	—	—	—	—
24.	Uttar Pradesh	63	895	19	2.12	22	2.46
25.	West Bengal	16	341	—	—	—	—
	TOTAL:	465					

No. of Blocks (Except A.P. Gujarat & Maharashtra)	4272	231	107
No. of Mandals (A.P)	1104	6	24
No. of Taluks (Gujarat)	184	12	14
No. of Watersheds (Maharashtra)	1503	—	34

Andhra Pradesh	—	1104 Mandals/309 Blocks
Gujarat	—	184 Taluks/218 Blocks
Maharashtra	—	1503 Watersheds/231 Taluks/66 blocks

Agricultural and Rural Cooperative Management Scheme

2298. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) how many farmers/NGOs have being given benefit in different State under the Agricultural and Rural Cooperative Management Scheme;

(b) whether Government have received proposals to give the benefit of the Scheme to the SC/ST Members who have borrowed from Nationalised Banks and extend the period of repayment of loans which were granted to State Governments under the Scheme; and

(c) if so, the details of action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) There is no such scheme under operation in the Ministry of Agriculture.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Question does not arise.

Development of agriculture in North Eastern Region

2299. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of schemes formulated by Government for development of agriculture sector in the NER particularly in the State of Assam during the last five years;

(b) the details of fund allocated by Government for the NER during this period;

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to increase the funds for agriculture in NER; and